



16th February 2023

Rebecca Altman,
Planning Case Officer
Eastleigh Borough Council
Eastleigh House
Upper Market Street
Eastleigh
SO50 9YN

Dear Rebecca,

**Re Planning Application F/22/94241 & F/22/94242 – Boorley Green Nursery
Urban Design - Erect single-storey children's nursery with off road car parking**

I have read the comments by the Urban Design Officer and as the Development Director of the proposed operator of the Nursery, when approved, I have a series of comments relating to the consultation response dated 7th February.

I have referenced the comments below in accordance with the structure of that Consultation document.

Overall, the building and layout suit our operation well, and following the pre-application consultation and historic discussions many of the alternative options have already been debated and principle of the layout within the site has been established.

Our nurseries operate securely and safely by having one entrance and reception where all children, parents and staff arrive, thus ensuring that the Management Team are fully aware of who has arrived at the building. The Reception location allows the Management team to see arrivals into the car park and the entrance lobby, where access to the building is strictly controlled from the Reception area.

The only way that children, parents and staff will leave the building by other means will be via emergency fire exits that form part of the fire strategy.

In respect of the specific points In the Consultation Response, I would respond as follows:-

1. Siting, Building lines, Footprint & External Layout:

- The Nursery site is accessed from Nairn Road, which serves as an access to the School and its Car Park, the terrace of houses and the Nursery. The comments around the approach and highways elements have already been commented upon by the Highways Officer. The site is already consented for use as a Nursery and was allocated from an earlier stage as part of the Boorley Park Masterplan.



- Relationship between the Building and the Public Realm - When coming into the site the entrance is immediately in the eyeline. The terrace of houses obscure the rest of the building until you reach the entrance to the site. The car park is designed to be accessible, practical and safe. The building separates the cars from the external play areas and the school playing field. As an operator we would wish to minimize the movement around the site so that both cars and pedestrians have the least distance to travel from the entrance of the site to the Reception in the South-East corner of the building. All entering the site can be observed by the management team from the Reception area. This supports the overall safeguarding on the site.
- The car park and road form a small percentage of the overall site. In order to deliver the elements necessary for the Nursery it is difficult to see how there could be greater efficiency.
- It is suggested that the entrance is concealed behind car parking. Proximity of the drop off and accessible car parking to the front door is essential to assist the safeguarding of the children. Other drop off spaces have protected access to the front door, keeping children and parents on footpaths as much as possible. The Reception Entrance has a dedicated design that helps create a focus and consequently, we believe that the relationship of the Reception to the car park is clear and safe, as is the pedestrian access, protected by a zebra crossing.
- There is a safe priority pedestrian route and zebra crossing running from the entrance of the site to the front door at Reception, which is at the nearest and most visible position from the entrance to the site. Children will be dropped off by car at the closest possible point from the entrance. A pedestrian can follow a path from Nairn Road, over the zebra crossing and to the entrance in a clear and safe fashion.
- It is suggested that the North facing group rooms are an issue. From an operators perspective, South facing group rooms are problematic as they can overheat in the summer creating an over reliance on cooling. This is less sustainable. The consented scheme was not South Facing. Children (particularly younger children) struggle to regulate their body temperature and this is an area of consideration for safeguarding of the children. The building will also provide shade in the garden during the summer, which is a critical operational consideration for the comfort and safety of the children.
- It is proposed to move the parking, turning area and bin store to the northern part of the site and move the building and its associated play spaces to the south so the entrance lobby is closer to the site entrance. This will not enhance safety, utility and privacy. It will also increase the amount of access road and tarmac (increasing the tarmac sea). It will also drive cars adjacent to the school playing fields (which are separated from its own parking by the school building). The play area to the rear avoids the need for increased summer shading and creates a privacy to the garden away from the entrance. We would not wish to put the children "on show" at the front of the site and would also not encourage all visitors, both pedestrian and vehicular, to travel through the site past the children.
- Historically, the children`s play areas have not been welcomed adjacent to housing to avoid the risk of nuisance to neighbours. The current position of the play area



presents the ideal opportunity to safeguard the children and avoid any possible nuisance to neighbours.

- High level slot windows between rooms are proposed. The group rooms are already linked by full height vision panels that assist the spread of light but, more fundamentally, provides children with opportunity to see children of other ages, which is positive for their transition through the age range in the Nursery.
- Bi-fold doors are proposed by the officer but we would actively avoid these. Firstly, they provide a finger trap risk for children which we would wish to avoid. Secondly, during times of the highest temperature, we would wish to minimize heat exchange from the exterior in order to maintain an acceptable operational temperature in the rooms and avoid overheating. The proposed single door, used in all of our nurseries, assists in this temperature control.
- We can utilize high level opening windows to allow additional ventilation into the rooms.
- In terms of the external play area we would propose a combination of soft pour and artificial grass for the safety surfacing.
- It is proposed to investigate a secondary entrance to the site. This will denigrate the security and safeguarding principles of the design as it would make it difficult for the management team to visually monitor arrivals through both entrances.

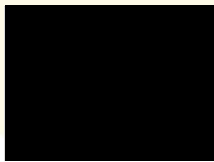
2. External Appearance & Materials

- I will leave the Developer to comment on the design of the South Elevation, but I do not recognize the description set out by the officer.
- The officer refers to protruding bricks as part of the design to add to the interest in the elevation. Protruding brickwork has caused an H&S issue at Poole where children have knocked against the protruding bricks and sustained injuries. Therefore we do not want them.
- In terms of large tracts of hard standing, we don't believe that there are areas of unnecessary hard standing on this site. There is an area of Forest School, incorporated into the design in consultation with the Case Officer during the pre-application process. This enables children to free flow into the formal play area and then also utilise the Forest School area with significant tree planting. The access road and turning are efficient whilst facilitating all the needs of the site, whilst the car park is designed to be safe, secure and convenient. Other areas of hard standing relate to Emergency Escape pathways.



As the Proposed Operator of this Nursery, we fully support the application and have been involved in the careful design of the scheme of the Nursery to ensure the safety of the children and ensure the delivery of a high quality education on a site that allows practical operation of the setting. The operation of our Nurseries have been honed over a period of over 30 years in 18 nurseries, where all our settings have secured Outstanding or Good judgments from OFSTED. We have also taken on board the comments from the Case Officer during the pre-Application process to match out requirements with the expectations of the Council.

Yours sincerely



Kevin Higgs
Development Director

